



Community Restorative Court Peacemaker Frequently Asked Questions

Due to limited capacity and space constraints, participants will be selected as capacity allows and participation will be confirmed based on availability. Selected participants will be notified with next steps.

1. Where do the circles take place?

While circles were previously done in person, COVID restrictions required us to transition to Zoom. Now, circles are done both in person (at our office: 2450 Rimrock Rd, Ste 301, Madison, WI 53713) and by Zoom. If the Victim wants to attend the circle, the circle needs to be in person.

2. What is a typical time commitment for Peacemakers?

A circle generally lasts 60-90 minutes, with the average being about 60 minutes. However, the length of the circle depends on the dynamics of the case.

A Peacemaker's availability and the number of referrals CRC receives are the two main factors. We schedule a circle according to the Respondent and Victim's schedules, and then we reach out to you to see if you are available. If you are not available, please do not be concerned about declining, because CRC will continue to ask for your participation in other circles.

3. How are Peacemakers chosen for the circles? Is it at random?

One of the pillars of Restorative Justice is building relationships. We strive to choose Peacemakers that we feel would be able to connect with the Respondent and the Victim. We want our Respondents and Victims to feel comfortable, supported, and safe. The more information you share with us on the CRC Peacemaker Information Form, the better!

4. Would a Peacemaker be part of a team at a circle, or by themselves?

Peacemakers are part of a team. CRC Staff facilitate the circle, and there are typically 2-3 Peacemakers present.

5. Is this only for Dane County, or would a Peacemaker be called upon by other counties?

Dane County only.

6. If I'm called upon and I have an existing obligation, how would that be handled?

Let CRC Staff know you are unavailable. We make circle requests by email, text, and phone. We continue to keep you on the Peacemaker rotation and will continue to request your participation in circles. We understand community members have many other obligations. We review our Peacemaker list monthly.

7. If I had previously agreed to participate in a circle but then have a last minute, urgent matter that makes me unable to attend, what should I do?

Please let the CRC Staff that reached out to you know ASAP through email, text, and phone. We have multiple Peacemakers scheduled for each circle and we will most likely still be able to move forward, but it is helpful to know that you are unable to attend so that we are not waiting.



8. Do I need to participate in all 3 sessions of the Peacemaker Training?

Yes. New information is introduced at each session.

9. What if I know the Respondent or the Victim, or have some other type of conflict involving the circle that I am concerned about?

Tell the CRC Staff as soon as you realize the relationship or other conflict and they will provide guidance.

10. Is there a dress code?

There is not a specific dress code. We expect Peacemakers to dress appropriately for the setting. Nothing offensive or disrespectful to others.

11. What if I do not agree with the Repair Harm Agreement?

During the circle process, the Repair Harm Agreement conditions are discussed by each person, and everyone has a voice in the process. If you are not in agreement, please provide your reason why and what you would like to offer as an alternative for the Repair Harm Agreement. There may be a number of rounds of discussion about the Repair Harm Agreement until the most beneficial agreement for the Victim and the Respondent is reached. This is a collective process.

12. What is expected of me as a Peacemaker in the circle?

Peacemakers play a critical role in the circle process. Being able to connect with and relate to the Respondent and Victim help them feel comfortable and safe, and more willing to share. Offering any life experience that you have that is relevant to the circle helps to build rapport and establish trust. You are there to be the voice of the community and share how the community was impacted by the event, and also to serve as a support person for the Respondent and Victim. Your voice is also important in determining the terms of the Repair Harm Agreement.

13. What is a Restorative Justice Circle like?

A Restorative Justice (RJ) Circle is a structured, facilitated conversation where participants sit in a circle to build understanding, name impacts, and create a plan to repair harm. Circles are designed to be relationship-centered and focused on accountability and healing rather than punishment.

The following videos show examples of RJ circles:

- LONG: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUyzieOrwnw>
- SHORT: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcTHYKX2Lfi>

CRC Website For more information about CRC, please visit: <https://www.dcdhs.com/Children-Youth-and-Family/Community-Restorative-Court>

CRC Video https://youtu.be/EM5oVeXTXao?si=3xFwDBwctEZ4o_qv